

ALI SINA'S DEBATE
WITH GRAND AYATOLLAH MONTAZERI

www.faithfreedom.org/debates/montazeri.htm

[In the Bulletin Board of *Jebhe Melli* (Democratic National Front of Iran), I (Ali Sina) asked several questions about Islam. **Ayatollah Montazeri** responded to some of them. What follows is the translation of his letter and my response to him.]

Question No. 1: Muhammad married Ayesha when she was 6-years old and consumed his marriage with her when she was 9-years-old. How could a 54 year-old man calling himself the messenger God have sexual feelings for a 9-year-old girl?

Ans 1. Ayatollah Montazeri:

In those days the tradition of Marriage was based on tribal customs and rituals. The objective of marriage was mainly to foster friendship with the father of the bride and therefore the marriage of the Prophet with Ayesha was a political move.

Sina:

This is not a good excuse to marry an underage child. I am not bothered of the marriage of the prophet with a daughter of Abu Bakr, but the fact that Ayesha was a child. It is not proper for a messenger of God to have sexual feelings for a little girl and it is unconscionable to act on them. In this day and age, if a 54-year-old man has an intercourse with a 9-year-old girl, he will be jailed and despised as a pedophile. Why should the Prophet be forgiven?

2. Ayatollah Montazeri:

The Prophet at the age of 25 married Khadijah, a woman who was 40-years-old and did not marry with another woman as long as she was alive. If the Prophet was a lustful man, he would not have married with an older woman and stay faithful to her all her life.

Sina:

Khadijah was a wealthy woman and the Prophet was a poor employee of her. Marrying a wealthy woman for him was climbing the ladder of social status. At that age, he was an orphan boy with little ambitions. Being a poor young man, no one paid attention to him. Khadijah was to him a boon. She gave him the comfort and the ease of mind from financial worries. Now he could afford to retreat to his cave and let his imagination fly; meet Jinns, battle with Satan, converse with Gabriel, and other creatures that haunted his feeble mind.

The fact that he remained faithful to Khadijah was not due to his chastity or loyalty but because she was a powerful woman and would not have tolerated infidelity from him. At that time Muhammad had no followers and he would have lost everything if he had offended his wealthy wife. That would have destroyed him completely.

However, he showed his true colors when he came to power and virtually nothing could stop him from doing what he pleased. It was then that he broke all the norms of the decency by the leave of his Allah.

3 - Ayatollah Montazeri.

The Prophets intention in marrying numerous old and widowed women, apart from sociopolitical considerations, was to foster their social status. Those were the days when women, especially slave girls, had little or no value and ignorance was such that they used to bury their daughters alive.

Sina

The Prophet married Khadijah, as I explained above, for her wealth. After her death he married Ayesha who was only 6 years old and due to Abu Bakr's request did not consummate his marriage with her for three years. During this time he needed a woman and the non-believers would not marry him as they

thought he was a lunatic. Among his handful of followers there were few eligible women to whom he could marry. Sauda was a Muslim woman and a widow. She was ideal under the circumstances. She could warm his bed and take care of his home and needs. He married her two months after the death of Khadija. Khadijah and Sauda were the only wives of the Prophet, with whom he married not for lust but out of necessity. Hafza, the daughter of Omar also may have not been very beautiful according to her own father and the Prophet may have married her to please him and for political reasons. Every one of his other wives was a beautiful virgin or a beautiful divorcee or widow. Majority, if not all of them were in their teens. Prophet married them or simply slept with them without marrying them only because of their looks. Sometimes he had to bend few rules and even bring Allah to reveal some verses for him in order to allow him get what he wanted. As was in the case of Zeinab Bent Jahsh, Marya and Ayesha, none of his wives were suffering from malnutrition or were lonely poor widows prior to marrying him. The stories of Safiyah, Marya and Zeinab are love stories, flavored with lust, betrayal and crime.

You also correctly described the deplorable condition of the slave girls in those days, but you forgot to mention that many of these slave girls were free people before the Prophet took away their freedom and reduced them into slaves. Are you saying that the slave girls should have been grateful to the Prophet for killing their loved ones and sell them in the markets to a Muslim who would use them as a maid and a sex slave?

4- Ayatollah Montazeri

The marriage of the Prophet with Ayesha took place in the first or second year of the Hijra at the insistence of her father Abu Bakr and some of his friends. The Prophet, for some time after the death of Khadijah, remained single. His main objective in accepting this marriage was for political reasons. The reason for

this marriage was that the Prophet was under the intense pressure by his enemies like Abu Lahab and Abu Jahl and was completely dependent of the protection of other tribes. Abu Bakr had a lot of tribal influence. And rejecting his offer, in those conditions, for the Prophet was not prudent. In reality this marriage was symbolic and not to satisfy his sexual instinct, because, as a rule a 53-year-old man cannot have sexual feelings for a 9-year-old girl.

Sina

The Prophet did not marry Ayesha at the insistence of her father. There are many Hadithes that show it was the Prophet who desired Ayesha and asked Abu Bakr to give him his then 6-year-old daughter for marriage. In fact Abu Bakr was shocked by such a request. He objected that he was a foster brother to the Prophet, which would have made such a marriage illicit. But the Prophet dismissed his concern saying that they were not real blood brothers and their oath of brotherhood was of no relevance in this case.

Sahih Bukhari 7.18: Narrated Ursa: The Prophet asked Abu Bakr for Aisha's hand in marriage. Abu Bakr said, "But I am your brother." The Prophet said, "You are my brother in Allah's religion and His Book, but she (Aisha) is lawful for me to marry."

Arabs were a primitive lot with little rules to abide. Yet they had some code of ethics that they honored scrupulously. For example, although they fought all the year round, they abstained from hostilities during certain holy months of the year. They also considered Mecca to be a holy city and did not make war against it. A foster son's wife was deemed to be a daughter-in-law and they would not marry her. Also it was customary that close friends made a pact of brotherhood and considered each other as true brothers. The Prophet disregarded all of these rules anytime they stood between him and his interests or wishes.

Abu Bakr and Muhammad had pledged to each other to be brothers. So according to their customs Ayesha was supposed to

be like a niece to the Holy Prophet. Yet that did not stop him to ask her hand even when she was only six years old.

But this moral relativist Prophet would use the same excuse to reject the daughter of Hamza who was also a foster brother to the Prophet because she was not very pretty.

Sahih Bukhari V.7, B62, N. 37: Narrated Ibn Abbas: It was said to the Prophet, "Won't you marry the daughter of Hamza?" He said, "She is my foster niece (brother's daughter)."

In the following Hadith the Prophet confided to Ayesha that he had dreamed of her before asking her hand from her father.

Sahih Bukhari 9.140: Narrated Aisha: Allah's Apostle said to me, "You were shown to me twice (in my dream) before I married you. I saw an angel carrying you in a silken piece of cloth, and I said to him, 'Uncover (her),' and behold, it was you. I said (to myself), 'If this is from Allah, then it must happen.' Then you were shown to me, the angel carrying you in a silken piece of cloth, and I said (to him), 'Uncover (her), and behold, it was you. I said (to myself), 'If this is from Allah, then it must happen.' "

The excuse that this marriage was “political” can be also dismissed easily. Abu Bakr was a good friend of the Prophet; he was one of his followers and his foster brother, he belonged to the same tribe of the Prophet; there was no need for the Apostle of Allah to sleep with his little daughter in order to foster his friendship. The evidence shows that the holy Prophet took advantage of this man’s devotion and abused the trust that he had in him and coerced him into giving his little girl in marriage to him. How could you deny the request of a man whom you believe to be a messenger of God?

Abu Jahl (the father of ignorance) was a derogatory nickname given to Abul Hakam (the father of erudition). It’s difficult to see in what ways sleeping with a 9-year-old girl would have protected the Prophet from him? As you said this marriage took place one

or two years after Hijra. His enemies were in Mecca. Even if such a marriage could have protected the Prophet, which is absurd, he was already safe in Medina, so that alibi is unacceptable.

Anyway, the point is not that the Prophet married a daughter of Abu Bakr. The point is that he had sex with a 9-year-old child. If you say it was done to protect himself, then the Prophet was an opportunist who raped a little girl to save his own life. Please don't say it was not rape because a 9-year-old child is not mature enough to consent and if she cannot consent it is rape. Your defense incriminates the messenger of Allah even more than my accusations.

You said that the marriage was symbolic. How symbolic it could be if the Prophet approached Ayesha when she, according to her own testimony, was still playing with her toys and gave her a completely different kind of toy to play with that "SURPRISED" that little girl?

Sahih Bukhari Volume 7, Book 62, number 90: Narrated Aisha: When the Prophet married me, my mother came to me and made me enter the house (of the Prophet) and NOTHING SURPRISED ME BUT THE COMING OF ALLAH'S APOSTLE TO ME IN THE FORENOON.

You wrote, "As a rule a 53-year-old man cannot have sexual feelings for a 9-year-old girl." That is absolutely true. This is precisely my point. Unfortunately we are not living in a perfect world and there are people who are psychologically disturbed and violate the rules. Even today there are old men who fantasize having sex with small children, keep their photos and exchange them on the Internet. They are known as pedophiles and to protect our children we put them in jail. If the Prophet hadn't "surprised" that little girl in the same forenoon that her mother took her to his house, I could have accepted that the marriage was 'symbolic', even though its merits are not clear. But when we see that the Apostle of Allah consummated his marriage with that little girl in

the same day that she was taken to him, it is hard to see it as “symbolic”; symbol of what?

5- Ayatollah Montazeri.

There is no doubt that the climatic conditions influence the physical and psychological growth of girls and their growth are more accelerated in hot climates.

Sina:

In the previous point you explained that the marriage was symbolic and “as a rule a 53-year-old man cannot have sexual feelings for a 9-year-old girl”. But now you are approaching from a totally different angle.

I am afraid 9-year-old girls in Arabia are still 9-year-old children. Unless you advance a scientific evolutionary theory that human race has undergone a huge mutation during these 1400 years and in those days women reached adulthood at the age of 9, the fact remains that the Prophet had sexual feelings for an underage girl and this was wrong. To be convinced that 9-year-old children were always children, even during the time of the Prophet, we do not have to look farther than another Hadith narrated by Ayesha herself. In the following hadith Ayesha is revealing that she was playing on a swing when her mother took her to the Prophet.

Sunan Abu-Dawud Book 41, Number 4915, also Number 4915 and Number 4915:

Narrated Aisha, Ummul Muminin: The Apostle of Allah (pbuh) married me when I was seven or six. When we came to Medina, some women came, according to Bishr's version: Umm Ruman came to me when I was swinging. They took me, made me prepared and decorated me. I was then brought to the Apostle of Allah (pbuh), and he took up cohabitation with me when I was nine. She halted me at the door, and I burst into laughter.

Sahih Bukhari Volume 8, Book 73, Number 151: Narrated Aisha: I used to play with the dolls in the presence of the Prophet, and my girl friends also used to play with me. When Allah's Apostle used to enter (my dwelling place) they used to hide themselves, but the Prophet would call them to join and play with me. (The playing with the dolls and similar images is forbidden, but it was allowed for Aisha at that time, as she was a little girl, not yet reached the age of puberty.) (Fateh-al-Bari, page 143, Vol.13)

Sahih Muslim Book 008, Number 3327: Aisha (Allah be pleased with her) reported that Allah's Apostle (may peace be upon him) married her when she was seven years old, and he was taken to his house as a bride when she was nine, and her dolls were with her; and when he (the Holy Prophet) died she was eighteen years old.

As a rule one would say that if she was still playing with her dolls, she was not mature enough to learn about sex, first hand, from a man who could be her grandfather.

6- Ayatollah Montazeri.

The difference of age between men, and the women they married, in the primitive societies, was acceptable and customary. Also it was not indecent or lewd for older men to marry very young girls and people of those days did not deem that to be something immoral. Even up to this day, one can find marriages with very young girls among the Arabs. As a rule one should not compare the customs of the primitive and tribal societies with the customs of the modern and advanced societies of today.

Sina

I agree that primitive societies had some customs that are shocking to our modern sensitivity. Primitive people did a lot of things that appall us today. They had human and animal sacrifices; practiced gender discrimination, slavery and many

forms of abuses of human rights. I am not condemning primitive societies for they did not know better. I am condemning modern people who follow those primitive societies by following the examples of a man who was just a product of his primitive society. I am condemning a man who called himself the Prophet of Allah, the “Mercy of God in the worlds”, Rahmatullah lil Alamin and the example for all mankind, who instead of setting the example of morality and rectitude followed the customs of his primitive society and thus reaffirmed them and perpetuated them as something to emulate. I am condemning a society that has forgotten its own past splendor and glory and is now trying to copy the customs of a primitive society and wants to establish their primeval precepts by following their prophet who had nothing new to add to that primitive society but was a product of it.

Yes, we should not compare the customs of the primitive and tribal societies with the customs of the modern and advanced societies of today. But why should we emulate them? Why should we follow them? Why should we accept their prophet who was incapable to break away from that primitiveness, barbarity and savagery?

If the Prophet was truly a prophet, he would have acted differently. He would have not followed the customs of his primitive society but would have set a new standard. If he followed the example of his primitive society why are we following him? On one hand the Muslims of the world study Muhammad’s life meticulously, try to imitate him in everything he did. They dress like him, shave like him, walk like him and talk like him, do as he did and live as he lived. They believe everything he did, was ordained by God and he was sent to be the example to all humanity. Yet you say that he did just what his ignorant and primitive society used to do and we should forgive his sins because he was just a victim of that society. How pitiful

are we who have not seen this yet. Look what has befallen to our mighty nation that has forsaken its own past glory and is now blindly following a man who followed the customs of his primitive society. Could we sink deeper than this? Is there any humiliation more denigrating than this?

7- Ayatollah Montazeri

The issues of each time and place must be viewed according to the standards of their own time and place and not according to standards of other times and places. On the other hand we find that the Prophet (pbuh) practically did not confront with many customs of his own time that were not in contrast with the educational and spiritual goals of Islam, but dealt with them gradually and with realism in order to slowly eradicate them.

Sina

I agree that issues should be appraised in the context of to their own time and place. Something that was acceptable 1400 years ago in Arabia may not look that good today. Perhaps we should not judge those people so harshly. But the question is why should we follow them? The solutions that were appropriate then are no more suitable for our time. Why follow a doctrine that has lost its utility and is stuck in history?

Muslims are advised to follow the Sunnah of the Prophet. You say that the Prophet was an Arab, following the traditions of his own people, so what he did was right in that context. But by following him now aren't we perpetuating those unfit and outdated customs of those Arabs of 1400 years ago?

You affirm that the Prophet did not confront those bad customs that were not in contrast with spiritual and educational goals of Islam. My question is then, what are the spiritual and educational goals of Islam? What is the main goal of Islam anyway? The Muslim's answer is, of course, to recognize that God is one and he does not have any partner and that Muhammad

is His messenger. This is the main concern of Islam. Moral and ethical issues are secondary. All the sins can be forgiven. Theft, homicide, murder and pedophilia are forgivable but assigning a partner to God is not.

“Allah forgiveth not that partners should be set up with Him; but He forgiveth anything else, to whom He pleaseth; to set up partners with Allah is to devise a sin most heinous indeed!” (Q.4: 48).

In other words, Saddam Hussein, Idi Amin, Ben Laden, Khalkhali and Khomeini will be forgiven despite all their crimes because they were Muslims and did not set partners to Allah but Gandhi who was a Hindu and as Muslims claim believed in a multitudes of deities will be burned for eternity in hell.

This Allah must be sick. He is a lunatic and a very miserable being for wanting so desperately to be known by his creatures and being so jealous. If this is the god of Muhammad he is not worthy of any praise but needs to be locked in a mental hospice very urgently.

As to those bad habits of the people that the holy Prophet did not confront directly but tried to deal with them gradually in order to eradicate them, what are they? In our world, pedophilia is a crime. It's a shame that the Prophet did not consider pedophilia important enough to deal with it immediately because it did not contrast the spiritual goals of Islam. But I would have been still happy if I could see that he at least discouraged it. But no, he did not discourage it at all. He actually endorsed it by himself setting the example. This is not the way to “eradicate” something. This is the way to confirm it, to perpetuate it and to promote it.

Prior to Islam, we Iranians were a cultured people. We did not have these barbaric customs and traditions. Thanks to Islam these shameful traditions have also crept into our culture and are being practiced in our motherland.

Pedophilia is only one of the gifts of Islam to us. The holy Prophet endorsed many traditions that are equally despicable. Assassination of one's enemies that is now so customary in our country was also a tradition of the Prophet. He used to send assassins to the houses of his enemies to kill them at night. The honorable members of the Islamic Regime of Iran are following that tradition of the messenger of God (peace be upon his immaculate soul)

Question 2: How could someone calling himself a messenger of God raid merchant caravans and act like a common hoodlum and a highway robber?

Ayatollah Montazeri:

As for the raids at the merchant caravans of the Quraish this caravan comprehended several wealthy Meccan enemies of Islam and was accompanied by Abu Sofyan the renowned arch enemy of Islam and the Muslims. In that year the hostilities of the Quraish and their instigations against Islam and the Muslims had intensified. Medina had just become the political and governmental center for the Muslims and it was under the attack of its Quraish enemies from every directions.

Many Muslims were forced to abandon their homes due to the Quraish persecution and had emigrated to Medina. These people wanted to retaliate and reclaim their properties from the Quraish. They had been informed that this caravan carried a lot of wealth. The leadership of the Muslims was also planning to render the highways that were purveying economically and militarily the enemy, unsafe. The main objective of this sudden attack was to render insecure the arteries so that the enemy is weakened in their war against the Muslims. These wars continued until Mecca was conquered.

Obviously when two countries or two forces are in war, and while there are no peace treaties between them, each side is

justified to debilitate the economical and the military strength of the opposing party and threaten their security.

This was, and still is, an accepted practice in the world. Highway robbery however is something completely different. A highway robber is a thug and a hoodlum that endangers the lives and the safety of the people that live peacefully in their own city or country without showing enmity to others and steals their property.

Sina:

Dear Ayatollah Ozma Montazeri,

To begin on this subject, I would like to thank you for being truthful and unlike most of the Muslims who claim all the wars of the Prophet were defensive, you acknowledge that he was actually the aggressor and it was he who raided merchant caravans. This saves a lot of time for both of us because I don't have to list his numerous attacks at those whom he considered to be his enemies.

However, you seem to justify his raids at merchant caravans, towns and his killing of the civilians because as you see them they were strategic military plans to weaken the position of the enemy. Muhammad's own explanation was that Muslims have the right to take back what the Quraish took away from them when they forced them to exile.

Notwithstanding, the truth is that Meccans did not drive the Muslims out of their homes. They emigrated on their own volition and because of Mohammad's insistence. At first he ordered his followers to immigrate to Abyssinia and then when he found enough disciples in Medina, he sent them thither.

The truth is that despite the fact that Muhammad constantly insulted the religion of the Quraish and infuriated them with his abrasive behavior, there is not a single incidence of physical

violence or persecution against him or his followers recorded in Islamic annals.

Muslims today would not tolerate any criticism against their religion. They would kill at once any person who dares to question their belief. This is what the prophet taught them to do. But Arabs prior to Muhammad were more tolerant. They used to live with the Jews and Christians in harmony without any sign of religious animosity between them. Yet the ultimate test of tolerance came when Muhammad started to taunt their gods. Despite that kind of libeling the Quraish evinced incredible degree of tolerance and although being offended, never harmed Muhammad or any of his cohorts.

Compare this to the treatment of the Baha'is in Iran. Baha'is do not insult Muhammad or his Allah, they do not reject the Imams nor disagree with any part of Quran. All they say is that their messenger is the Promised One of the Muslims. This is nothing compared to Muhammad's affronts of the beliefs of the people of Quraish. Nevertheless Muslims have not spared any act of atrocity against the Baha'is. They killed many of them, jailed them, tortured them, beat them, denied them of their human rights and treated them with utter inhumanity. None of that was done against Muhammad and his followers in Mecca even though he constantly accosted their gods with showers of taunts and would imprecate their sacred beliefs as if daring them to persecute.

When the Meccans had enough of it and could no more stand Muhammad's mocking of their deities, a body of their elders repaired to Abu Talib, the uncle of the Prophet and complained: *"This Nephew of thine hath spoken opprobriously of our gods and our religion: and hath abused us as fools, and given out that our forefathers were all astray. Now, avenge us thyself of our adversary; or, (seeing that thou art in the same case with ourselves,) leave him to its that we may take our satisfaction."* Abu Talib spoke to them softly and assured them he would

counsel his nephew to be more deferential. But Muhammad would not change his proceedings. So they went again to Abu Talib in great vexation; and warned him that if he would not restrain his nephew from his offensive conduct, they would have to restrain him themselves. They added thus: *“and now verily we cannot have patience any longer with his abuse of us, our ancestors, and our gods. Wherefore either do thou hold him back from us, or thyself take part with him that the matter may be decided between us.”*

This is all that is recorded about the persecution of the Muslims in Mecca. The above is a warning but falls short of issuing a threat. In fact until Abu Talib was alive and even after his death until Muhammad stayed in Mecca no harm was inflicted upon him and nor any of his followers suffered persecution.

The only physical violence reported against a Muslim is the beating of Omar of his own sister who had embraced Islam, which led to his own acceptance. This however cannot be called a real religious persecution but a family violence as Omar was an irritable man with an unpredictable temper who would lose his composure easily and resort to violence. Yet even this hadith may not be true because in another Hadith narrated by Omar himself he describes his story of conversion to Islam differently.

So the question arises, if there were no persecution against the Muslims, who forced them out of their homes? We know that many of them abandoned Mecca and emigrated first to Abyssinia and then to Medina. Why would they leave their homes if they were not in danger?

The answer to this question can be found with Muhammad and what was going in his mind. It was he who asked them to leave. In fact he ordered them to leave making it a mandate from Allah. The Following verses clarify this perfectly.

“Lo! Those who believed and left their homes and strove with their wealth and their lives for the cause of Allah, and those who

took them in and helped them: these are protecting friends one of another. And those who believed but did not leave their homes, ye have no duty to protect them till they leave their homes; but if they seek help from you in the matter of religion then it is your duty to help (them) except against a folk between whom and you there is a treaty. Allah is Seer of what ye do.” (Q.8: 72)

These are very harsh words against his own followers who did not leave Mecca and stayed behind. In other part he presses further this point.

They long that ye should disbelieve even as they disbelieve, that ye may be upon a level (with them). So choose not friends from them till they forsake their homes in the way of Allah; if they turn back (to enmity) then take them and kill them wherever ye find them, and choose no friend nor helper from among them, (Q.4: 89)

In the above verse Muhammad is ordering the believers of Mecca to forsake their homes and go to Medina. He goes as far as to instruct other Muslims to kill them if they decide to return home, which is consistent with the cultic nature of Islam. So as we can witness the exodus of the Muslims from Mecca was not due to any persecution by the idolaters. There was no such a persecution even though Muhammad exasperated the Quraish to their limit of forbearance with his triad of insults. The new converts left Mecca because Muhammad asked them to. His pressure tactics was so intense that he even told them that they would go to hell if they stayed behind and did not emigrate.

Lo! As for those whom the angels take (in death) while they wrong themselves, (the angels) will ask: In what were ye engaged? They will say: We were oppressed in the land. (The angels) will say: Was not Allah's earth spacious that ye could have migrated therein? As for such, their habitation will be hell, an evil journey's end (Q.4: 97)

Muhammad had plans to conquer the Arabia and subdue Persia:

The inevitable question is however: “why?” Why would the Prophet force his followers to emigrate when they were not being persecuted in their own town? Why would he coerce them to leave their own homeland? This tactic was so unorthodox that even western historians and scholars of Islam like Sprenger and Sir William Muir have failed to see the plot that Muhammad was brewing in his mind from the very early days that he realized there are a few people who actually believed him to be the messenger of God.

Muir, in *The Life of Mohammad*, quotes Hishami:

“The Coreish, hearing that Abu Talib lay at the point of death, sent a deputation in order that some contact should be made to bind both parties, after his decease should have removed all restraint upon Mahomet. They proposed accordingly that they should retain their ancient faith, and that Mahomet should promise to refrain from abuse or interference; in which case they on their part would agree not to molest him in his faith. Abu Talib called Mahomet, and communicated to him the reasonable request. Mahomet replied -" Nay, but there is one word, which if ye concede, you will thereby conquer Arabia, and reduce Ajam under subjection." "Good!" said Abu Jahl, "not one such word, but ten." Mahomet replied," Then say,-There is no God but the Lord, and abandon that which ye worship beside him." And they clapped their hands in rage;- " Dost thou desire, indeed, that we should turn our gods into one God? That were a strange affair!" And they began to say one to another, "This fellow is obstinate and impracticable. Ye will not get from him any concession that ye desire. Return, and let us walk after the faith of our forefathers till God determine the matter betwixt us and him." So they arose and departed”. Hishami, p.136

From the above story we can establish several facts.

a) The Quraish were not persecuting the Muslims and their leader but asking him to respect their beliefs.

b) Muhammad was adamant to continue his abrasive and opprobrious behavior towards the people of Mecca and their religion.

c) Muhammad was dreaming to conquer Arabia and “reduce Ajam under subjugation”.

As it becomes clear, the Prophet when yet in Mecca with no more than a handful of follower was already fantasizing to conquer Arabia and subdue Persia. Is it befitting for a messenger of God to indulge in reveries about “conquering” and “subduing”? One would expect that the one chosen by God to be the light for all mankind, have nobler thoughts of guiding, educating and liberating people, not conquering them and subduing them. These are not the thoughts of a messenger of God but of a conqueror and a vanquishing subjugator. These are the thoughts of authoritarian conquistadors like Changiz Khan, Napoleon, Hitler and even Saddam Hussein, but not of a Prophet of God who, should radiate with love, compassion and other spiritual qualities.

The Prophet was indeed a vivid case of megalomania. He was a manic/depressive par excellence. When he was high, he had these grandiose thoughts of conquering the world and when he was low he would indulge in thoughts of suicide.

Sahih Bukhari V. 9, Book 87, Number 111

“...the Divine Inspiration was also paused for a while and the Prophet became so sad as we have heard that he intended several times to throw himself from the tops of high mountains and every time he went up the top of a mountain in order to throw himself down, Gabriel would appear before him and say, "O Muhammad! You are indeed Allah's Apostle in truth" whereupon his heart would become quiet and he would calm down and would return

home. And whenever the period of the coming of the inspiration used to become long, he would do as before, but when he used to reach the top of a mountain, Gabriel would appear before him and say to him what he had said before.

This change of mood gives us the clue that the Prophet was not a messenger of any god but a mentally sick, unstable manic/depressive man. His dreams of conquering and subduing were so intense, and they consumed his inner thoughts with such an ardor that they expunged the shades of right and wrong from his conscience. For him his dream of domination became his primary goal. And to achieve that goal he would stop at nothing. He lied compulsively and so convincingly that even he managed to fool himself. Although his earlier visions were the result of his hallucinations, when those hallucinations stopped he kept revealing spurious verses and perusing his dreams of grandeur with a remarkable obduracy distinctive only to mentally infirm. Megalomaniacs like Muhammad and Hitler often are charismatic people with a compelling personality that would mesmerize their audience with their speeches, their oomph, and confidence. Watching Hitler's buoyant, upbeat, inspiring and motivating speeches with his air of confidence and self-assuredness that captivated the imagination of millions of his German listeners, perhaps can give us an insight into the mind of the Apostle of Allah and explain the mystery of his spell over his naïf and unsophisticated companions and devotees.

As he asserted in the deathbed of his uncle Abu Talib, Muhammad dreamed of conquering Arabia and subduing the mighty Persia even when his followers were but a handful of untrained and insignificant lot, with no means to fight or defend them selves. However he was not just a dreamer, but also someone who would follow up his dreams with extraordinary single mindedness and endurance. In his quest for personal grandeur he would sacrifice everything. He would kill those who

would oppose him. He would slay those who would turn their backs to him. He would assassinate those who criticize him. He would wipe out the entire Jewish and Christian population from the Arabic Peninsula and execute one of the most ruthless genocides on the Jewish population of Medina and Kheibar. He would fabricate stories of jinns and angels and would fool his followers with tales of his visits to Heaven and Hell to manipulate his credulous and foolhardy believers. And he would invent an Allah, proclaim to be his messenger and the sole contact between him and thus demand total and unconditional submission to him through himself.

His dreams were of greatness and his plan was perfect. His timing was ideal and he had the best people to work with. Arabs of his time were superstitious, bigot, fanatical, ambitious, ruthless, barbarian, stubborn, chauvinist and above all gullible and a credulous crowd. Conquering Arabia and subduing Ajam for a man of his allure in that milieu was a synch.

But how would he realize his dream without an army? How would he convince his followers to take up their swords and use it against their own brothers, fathers and friends? He had to create the discontent. He had to cause enmity where there was none. He had to incite brother against brother and divide the people so they would willingly take arms and slay each other at his behest. Thus, on one hand he set on a campaign to imprecate the deities of the Quraish and taunt them constantly with his rude and boorish remarks to excite them and incite them to hostility who would in turn react and harass his followers and make them feel victimized and wronged. On the other hand he would force his followers to endure the hardship of exile, abandon their homes and flee to a foreign land. As a consequence he put one group against the other, and caused his followers to feel persecuted. Now they were poor, sore and suffered. Muhammad needed that anger and bitter-

ness to foster his own dominance over them and command their obedience. In order to rule, he had to divide.

In order to rule ignorant people and make them side with you, you have to give them an enemy. Nothing can make people rally around you more than a common foe. This is the oldest trick in the book, which has been used successfully by all dictators throughout the history of mankind. Even Khomeini used that policy to strengthen his dominance over those gullible Iranians who believed in his lies.

Muhammad, as he boasted in Quran "*Makaroo va makara Allah va Allah khyrul makereen*", was a master deceiver himself. He managed to create religious hate among people who despite their ignorance and bigotry never had evinced religious intolerance before. Now he had a group of supporters who were impoverished, discontent and angry. They were ready to fight for him and help him realize his dreams. Obedience to "God and his Apostle" became the watchword of Islam; And of course as usual Allah would reveal verses that give to his Apostle total authority.

Whomsoever disobeyeth GOD AND HIS PROPHET; verily to him shall be the Fire of Hell; they shall be therein always, forever!
(Q.72: 23)

It is of interest to note that after enduring years of verbal abuse the Quraish boycotted Muhammad and his supporters from commercial transactions. They would not buy anything from them nor sell to them and would not marry anyone among them. They may even have threatened to punish him if he would not stop insulting their gods. Upon this Muhammad barricaded himself with the rest of his family members, the Hashemis, (excluding Abu Lahab) in a Quarter of Mecca known as She'b of Abu Talib. This self-imposed durance lasted about 3 years. During this time they would venture out only at the time of hajj and retreat once the pilgrimage was over. But in no time Quraish attacked that quarter. On the contrary they seemed quite pleased that

Muhammad was not in the streets shouting obscenities at their deities. Had the Quraish intended to persecute Muslims or kill Muhammad, they had plenty of opportunities to do so. Yet they showed no hostility in the form of violence to any of the Muslims, though it was much easier for them to wipe out Muhammad and his family than it was for him to exterminate the three Jewish tribes of Medina.

Nonetheless, the Quraish was ever suspicious of the Prophet and his movements, as they had heard that his followers were increasing in number in Medina. The tone of Muhammad's message was of doom and gloom and his actions towards the Meccans were perceptibly hostile. Therefore it was natural to be apprehensive of his moves and watch him carefully. Their suspicions picked when they learned that the Prophet had a clandestine rendezvous at midnight with a conclave of the Pilgrims from Medina in Acaba, at the outskirts of Mecca. Meccans were not at war with the people of Yathrib (Medina) but still the Medinans were foreigners. What the Prophet had to do with them? Why he was conspiring with outsiders and what was the purpose of his secret meeting with them in the middle of the night? We cannot blame the Quraish to be nervous and concerned for their own security as they saw that secret gathering an unwarrantable interference in the domestic affairs of their town.

This forced them to meet and confer with each other to gauge the gravity of the situation. The outcome of that meeting is not clear, yet it caused Muhammad to fear for his life and flee the town with his friend Abu Bakr.

Muhammad later recalls that moment and conjectures that perhaps they were plotting to detain him, slay him or expel him. But there is no evidence to prove any of those charges and even he himself nor his All Knowing god seems to be sure as the real outcome of that meeting.

"And call to mind when the unbelievers plotted against thee, that they might detain thee, or slay thee, or expel thee. Yea, they plotted; but God plotted likewise. And God is the best of plotters."
(Q.8: 29)

In Medina

After Muhammad and Abu Bakr fled to Medina, their families stayed behind for several weeks. But nothing befell them and the Quraish did not harm, accost or harass them in any ways. Although as Muir points out, *"it was not unreasonable that they should have been detained as hostages against any hostile incursion from Medina. These facts lead us to doubt the intense hatred and bitter cruelty, which the strong colouring of tradition is ever ready to attribute to the Coreish In accordance with this view is the fact that the first aggressions, after the Hegira, were solely on the part of Mahomet and his followers. It was not until several of their caravans had been waylaid and plundered, and blood had thus been shed, that the people of Mecca were forced in self-defence to resort to arms"*

The fact that Mohammad and Abu Bakr trusted that their families would be safe if left alone in Mecca is a clear indication that the hostilities attributed to the Quraish against the Muslims is an exaggeration and an excuse or a justification for their later invasion of Mecca. None of the Muslims were exiled. All of them were able to emigrate by their own volition. A few of them were detained by their family members and a few who were slaves could not escape. The rest joined Muhammad with no obstruction from the Quraish.

When Muhammad reached Medina, there were about a couple of hundred of emigrants and perhaps an equal number of Medinans of the tribes of Khazraj and Aus who had believed in him. The Meccans were unskilled people and found employment in the fields and plantations. They mostly worked as laborers and journeymen for the wealthy Jews. It was hard on them. The belief

in Allah was good but it would not feed them. Muhammad was aware that he could not keep his followers for long if he failed to satisfy their earthly needs. Moreover he had made them immigrate for a purpose: to wage war for him and establish his dominance over Arabia and subdue the Persia.

However his small cluster of followers was unqualified for military tasks. Yet he had offered those who left their homes a goodly home in this world and it was time to deliver his promise or face sedition and defection.

To those who leave their homes in the cause of Allah, after suffering oppression,- We will assuredly give a goodly home in this world; but truly the reward of the Hereafter will be greater. If they only realized (this)! (Q.16: 41)

Whence would he provide them all the goodly things he offered them in this world? Certainly Allah would not be able to do it himself. That is when he had to put to action the plan that he had devised years earlier. Of course conquering Arabia and subduing the Ajam was not possible with just a few disciples but raiding the merchant caravans and plundering their goods was.

The Prophet turns a bandit

So the Prophet turns a bandit and thenceforth he ceased to preach, "Speak good to men..." 2: 83 or "Be patient with what they say, and part from them courteously".73: 10 and started to call for blood, "qateloo" (kill) became the buzzword of Allah's subsequent messages.

During the first six months of Muhammad's arrival to Medina, nothing important happened. The immigrants, including Muhammad himself, had to struggle to make a living to pay for shelter and food.

However the thoughts of Mohammad were not thoughts of peace. He had plans, big plans. The number of his followers were increasing, some defecting from Mecca joining other immigrants

and some accepting Islam in Medina. Now he was in a position to command a party of warriors. But the people of Medina had pledged only to defend the Prophet from attack, not to join him in any aggression against the Quraish.

So instead of attacking Mecca, in Dec. A.D. 622 In Ramadhan, seven months after his arrival, the prophet dispatched his uncle Hamza, at the head of thirty Refugees, to surprise a Meccan caravan returning from Syria under the guidance of Abul Hakam (Abu Jahl). This caravan was guarded by some 300 men. Hamza's men had to retreat empty handed to Medina and Abul Hakam proceeded onwards to Mecca. This was the first confrontation started by Muhammad, which was aborted because of shortage of men and bad planning. The god who told Muhammad to raid and plunder the caravans did not tell him how to do it. And the Prophet had to learn it by trial and error just like any greenhorn thief.

The next event took place a month later in Jan. A.D. 623. At that time Muhammad sent another party double the strength of the first one, under the command of Obeida, ibn Harith, in pursuit of another caravan protected by Abu Sofian with 200 men. This time the Quraish were surprised while their camels were grazing by a fountain in the valley of Rabigh and some arrows were exchanged but the invaders retreated after realizing that their number is much less than the men in the caravan.

One month later, a third expedition started under the youthful Sad, with twenty followers, in the same direction. He was desired to proceed as far as Kharrar, a valley on the road to Mecca, and to lie in wait for a caravan expected to pass that way. Like most of the subsequent marauding parties intended to affect a surprise, they marched by night and lay in concealment during the day. Notwithstanding this precaution, when they reached their destination in the fifth morning, they found that the caravan had passed a day before, and they returned empty-handed to Medina.

These excursions occurred in the winter and spring of the year 623 A.D. On each occasion, Muhammad mounted a white banner on a staff or lance, and presented it to the leader, on his departure. The names of those who carried the standard, as well as the names of the leaders, are carefully recorded in hadithes in these and in all other expeditions of importance.

There were three more failed robbery attempts by the Prophet and his men at Abwa, Bowat and Osheira.

Nakhlah the breakthrough

More than one year had past and despite several attempts and expeditions none of the holy Prophet's robberies were successful. The megalomaniac Messenger of Allah finally realized that he has to start with smaller targets. So when the news reached him of a small merchant caravan going from Mecca to Taif which was guarded by four men, he seized the opportunity and sent Abdallah ibn Jahsh, with seven other immigrants, to hijack that caravan.

The group of bandits went to Nakhla a Valley between that Mecca and Taif known for its date orchards and waited there. In a short time a caravan laden with wine, raisins, and leather, came up. It was guarded by four Quraishites, who, seeing the strangers, were alarmed, and halted. To disarm their apprehensions, one of Abdallah's party shaved his head, in token that they were returning from the lesser pilgrimage; for this was one of the months in which that ceremony was ordinarily performed. The men of the caravan were at once reassured, and turning their camels adrift to pasture, began to prepare food for themselves. Then one of Abdallah's men advanced; and discharging an arrow, killed a man of the convoy, on the spot. All then rushed upon the caravan, and securing two, the rest of the guards as hostages let them along with the goods stolen to Medina. One man escaped

Upon arriving at Medina, the followers of Muhammad were disappointed for the envoy had violated a long-standing tradition

of no hostility during the sacred months. This was embarrassing to the messenger of Allah and he pretended to be angry. He took all the goods confiscated and jailed the men captured and demonstrated his displeasure. But soon the resourceful Prophet took out another verse from Allah out of his sleeve and condoned the crime thus:

"They will ask thee concerning the Sacred Months, whether they may war therein. SAY: - Warring therein is grievous, but to obstruct the way of God, and to deny him, and hinder men from the Holy Temple, and expel his people from thence, is more grievous with God. Tempting (to Idolatry) is more grievous than killing. They will not leave off to fight against you until they turn you from your faith, if that were ill their power; but whosoever amongst you shall turn back from his faith and die an Unbeliever, -verily their Works are rendered of no effect in this Life and in the next. These are the Dwellers in Hell, - forever therein. But they that believe, and they who emigrate for the sake of their faith, and strive earnestly in the way of God, - let them hope in the mercy of God: for God is forgiving and merciful." (Q.2: 217)

After promulgating this verse, Muhammad gave over the booty to the captors, who, after presenting a fifth of it to Mohammad, divided the remainder among themselves.

Before Abdallah reached Nakhla, two of his men, Sa'd and Otba, lost their camels that wandered in the desert. They went after their camels and missed the action in Nakhla. When Abdallah returned to Medina, these two men had not returned yet. Muhammad feared that they were captured by the Quraish and refused to ransom the captives till he was assured that no foul play had been used against them: "if ye have killed my two men," he said, "verily, I will put yours also to death." But, soon after, they showed up, and the Prophet accepted the proffered ransom, forty ounces of silver for each and released them.

Attacking merchant caravans, fighting during the holy months, deceiving and killing innocent people, stealing the goods unlawfully, taking human hostages, demanding ransom for their release, threatening to kill them, etc. are not acts that one would expect from a messenger of God. What the Prophet did here is criminal. There can be no justification for that whatsoever.

It was only then that it became clear for the Quraish that their opponent respected no rules. It is interesting to note that the first blood spelt between the Muslims and the non-believers was spelt by a Muslim. In no time Muslims were victimized. They were always victimizers, the aggressors and provokers.

Ibn Hisham confirmed, *"This was, the first booty that the Mussulmans obtained; the first captives they seized; the first life they took."*

The Prophet is said to have designated Abdallah, the head of the bandits of Nakhah, with the distinction of Amir al Mominin, "Commander of the Faithful" an appellation that was assumed in after days by the Caliphs.

This attack showed that the Prophet and his followers would respect neither life nor the universally honored sacred months. But still the Quraish did not retaliate. Though some of the Muslims were still in Mecca, the Quraish attempted no cruelties or reprisals against them. This is in contrast with the Prophet's way of punishing some for the faults of others. When his men captured the guards of the Caravan in Nakhlah, he was ready to kill them just by assuming that his other lost followers were captured and killed by the Meccans. Even if that were true, how could a messenger of God put to death innocent people for the sins of others? However, the most horrendous act of the Prophet's injustice is his massacre of all the men of Bani Quraiza in retaliation of one of them killing a Muslim who in turn had killed a Jew.

After the successful foray in Nakhlah, the Prophet increased his profitable marauding activities and became an expert in art of plundering and warfare. More caravans were attacked and more booty filled the coffins of the Prophet and enriched his followers. It was then that the messenger of Allah started to reveal verses encouraging fighting and killing. Like the following:

"Bear good tidings unto the Righteous. Truly the Lord will keep back the Enemy from those who believe, for God loveth not the perfidious Unbeliever. Permission is granted unto those who take up arms for that they have been injuriously entreated; and verily the Lord is Mighty for the assistance of those who have been driven from their homes without just cause, for no other reason than that they said, God is our Lord. And truly if it were not that God holdeth back mankind, one part of them by means of another part (Q.22: 41)

Notice how the holy Prophet is twisting the facts to rouse his followers into killing frenzy. As we saw Muslims were not "injuriously treated" and they were not driven from their homes. The Quraish did not persecute them for their belief in God. These inflammatory verses were lies. But he wanted to incite them to enlist in his army and help him realize his dream of conquering the Arabia and subduing the Ajam.

The treaty that was signed in Medina obliged the inhabitants of that town to protect Mohammad if he was attacked by the Meccans, but it did not require them to take part in offensive wars, plunder and enrich the prophet with spoils of war. But Muhammad needed their participation in his expeditions. The solution was found, as usual, in a revelation.

"War is ordained for you, even though it be irksome unto you. Perchance ye dislike that which is good for you, and love that which is evil for you. But God knoweth, and ye know not."

At this point we have to ask ourselves what makes a man a messenger of God if not his deeds and good conduct? In what

ways the Prophet excelled the common thieves, the gangsters, the thugs, the hooligans, the hoodlums and the criminals?

The ultimate question

Dear Ayatollah, in your letter you seemed to approve of what the Prophet did because the ends justified the means. You were not concerned at all that what he did was unethical, dishonest and ruthless because he was a messenger of God and because of that whatever he did, even though it was blatantly unjust was right.

The point is not who Muhammad was and what he did. Muhammad is dead and what he did is history. The point is who are WE? What can be said of a society that holds a thug, a common assassin, and a marauding thief as her spiritual leader? What can be said about us, our values and morals, when we hale a man like Muhammad as our teacher? How can we aspire to become a spiritual society when our beloved Prophet was a murderer? How can we ever establish humanistic values of tolerance, equality, justice and love when our spiritual leader had none of them? These are the questions that our nation must answer in this crucial moment of her existence. This is the first time after 1400 years of living under terror and being blindfolded that we have the chance to see for our selves, question and face the truth.

We are what we think and we think in accordance to what we believe. Can we ever become a peaceful, loving, advanced and civilized nation when we believe in a man that was a mass murderer, a liar, a pedophile, a thief, an assassin, a rapist, a lustful womanizer, a hateful warrior, and a prowling gangster? Can we ever have peace when our Prophet taught us nothing but war? Can we ever tolerate each other and celebrate our differences when the man whom we want to emulate in everything had nothing but scorn for those who were different from him? Can we ever respect the women of our society when our spiritual guide, whom we call infallible, called them deficient in intelligence,

crooked ribs, calamities and domains of Satan? Can we ever replace the hate that is burning in our hearts for the minorities among us when our messenger said that they are najis, should be killed, or subdued, humiliated and pay Jizyah? Can we ever love each other when our Prophet told us to hate? Isn't it true that the leaders should be ahead of his followers? How can we go forward, when our leader was so backward?

To know Islam, and the truth about it is ultimately to know who we are, why our history evolved the way it did and how we got here? The physicians know that once the cause of a disease is discovered, the cure is around the corner. It is time that we as a society pay attention to the cause of our malaise. Perhaps we can find our remedy around the corner.

Question No. 3: The Prophet attacked Kheibar, enslaved Safiyah and raped her in the same day that he killed her husband, father and many of her relatives. Is this how a messenger of God should behave?

Ayatollah Montazeri:

As for the Question concerning Safiyah, it is important to pay attention to the following points.

1- Safiyah was the daughter of Huyah ibn Akhtab the chief of the tribe of Bani Nadir. She had lost her father in the battle of Kheibar and her husband had been killed before the peace treaty. The hostages in those days had very hard and dire life. For this reason according to the recommendation of the prophet (pbuh) the women of the idolaters who were captured in war either married Muslim men who were previously married to other women or became their slaves maids to ascertain their own survival. Polygamy in those days was customary and was the best way for the protection of the women who had not husbands-let alone the women who were hostages.

Sina:

Dear Ayatollah Ozma Montazeri,

It is true that Safiyah had lost both her father and her husband and many of her relatives, but you forgot to mention that she lost her loved ones because the Prophet killed them. Killing men and stealing their women was the tradition of the cavemen. One would expect that the Prophet of God would not perpetuate the barbaric traits of the cavemen but rather set a new standard of ethical and moral conduct.

You make it sound as if the Prophet was doing these women a favor by marrying them and saving them from their miseries but forget to mention that it was him who put them in this dire situation in the first place. These women were not hostages before Muhammad raided their towns, killed their loved ones and enslaved them.

What the Prophet did was what the bandits and the brigand used to do in the old days. One must be completely screwed up with his values to see any goodness in this utterly shameful and barbaric act of the Prophet. Killing men and possessing their women were acts of savagery. There is not a single good in such a heinous deed.

If as you say the Prophet wanted to save these poor women from very hardship that they were facing why he did not marry the older women? Why he picked the prettiest of all? Safiyah was chosen because of her looks. Here is the Hadith.

Narrated Abdul Aziz: Anas said, 'When Allah's Apostle invaded Khaibar, we offered the Fajr prayer there yearly in the morning) when it was still dark. The Prophet rode and Abu Talha rode too and I was riding behind Abu Talha. The Prophet passed through the lane of Khaibar quickly and my knee was touching the thigh of the Prophet. He uncovered his thigh and I saw the whiteness of the thigh of the Prophet. When he entered the town,

he said, 'Allahu Akbar! Khaibar is ruined. Whenever we approach near a nation then evil will be the morning of those who have been warned.' He repeated this thrice. The people came out for their jobs and some of them said, 'Muhammad (has come).' (Some of our companions added, "With his army.") We conquered Khaibar, took the captives, and the booty was collected. Dihya came and said, 'O Allah's Prophet! Give me a slave girl from the captives.' The Prophet said, 'Go and take any slave girl.' He took Safiyya bint Huyay. A man came to the Prophet and said, 'O Allah's Apostles! You gave Safiyya bint Huyay to Dihya and she is the chief mistress of the tribes of Quraiza and An-Nadir and she befits none but you.' So the Prophet said, 'Bring him along with her.' So Dihya came with her and when the Prophet saw her, he said to Dihya, 'Take any slave girl other than her from the captives.' Anas added: The Prophet then manumitted her and married her."

Thabit asked Anas, "O Abu Hamza! What did the Prophet pay her (as Mahr)?" He said, "Herself was her Mahr for he manumitted her and then married her." Anas added, "While on the way, Um Sulaim dressed her for marriage (ceremony) and at night she sent her as a bride to the Prophet. (*Sahih Bukhari* 1.367)

From the above Hadith, we learn that the raid of Khaibar was a bolt from the blue. The people of the town were not warned and were not prepared for this foray. It was typical of the Prophet not to let his victims to defend themselves. He would attack them dishonorably with no warning. In fact, the name Quzvaḥ means nothing but "sudden attack". Khaibar broke no treaty with the Prophet; there was not any sign that they would endanger the Muslims. The only reason that the Prophet invaded that town, killed whoever stood in his way and took the pretty women as sex-slaves was that he needed their wealth.

The holy Prophet did not stop at that, he even forced those elderly men and women whom he did not kill and did not take as

sex slaves to till the land and give him 50% of the proceeds. Any person with a grain of fairness would know that this is not justice. What the Prophet did was unholy and satanic.

Ayatollah Montazeri

2- After Safiyah became a hostage, there were a few people who wanted to marry her. But since she was the daughter of the chief of the tribe, the Prophet in consideration of her social status, did not allow others to marry her. Safiyah herself was reluctant to marry ordinary people. Therefore the Prophet (pbuh) for the sake of protecting Safiyah, accepted to marry her. The Prophet gave Safiyah the choice to return to her relatives or stay in Medina and embrace Islam. And told her that if she wanted to remain a Jew he would not impose Islam on her. Safiyah chose the latter. The historians agree that being a wife of the Prophet was a great privilege and was regarded with high esteem. The Holy Quran (Ahzab: 6) calls the wives of the Prophet as “Mother of the Believers”

Sina

As for the Safiyah, it is evident that the Prophet took her for one reason only that was because she was a beautiful woman. Muhammad took it away from Dahya after seeing her. It had nothing to do with the position of her father. If the Prophet had any regards for her father and his position he would not have slew him. The truth is manifest as the sun. You are free to close your eyes and deny it.

You said that the Prophet gave Safiyah the choice to join her people or follow her. The Prophet killed her father, her husband and many of her relatives. Those who were left were to work the land and pay 50% of their income to the Prophet as Jizyah. Even then the Prophet changed his mind in a short period of time and expelled all the Jews from Khaibar. So the choice you are talking about was not much of a choice. It was the choice between

pleasing sexually an old fetid man who was the murderer of her loved ones or joining a bunch of old men and women who were neither warriors nor young enough to serve as sex slaves to the followers of the Prophet. In the first case she had the chance to live but if she joined her people her fate was uncertain, she had to work in the fields and pay half of the proceeds to Muhammad (pbuh). There is not much choice here.

Being a wife of the Prophet may have had its prestige. However, I believe it is much preferable to live with one's loved ones than with their murderer; even if that murderer is the Prophet of Allah.

Ayatollah Montazeri

3 - If the Messenger of Allah –God forbid- was a lustful man, he would not have married a 40-year-old woman in his youth when he had the chance to marry with the best of girls of the noble tribes of Arabs. On the other hand, people who are lustful are also inclined towards luxuries and gluttony and are attracted towards other pleasures and gratification that life can offer. While, as history has recorded, the Prophet and his wives had a very modest and low in accordance to their own time, to the extent that his wives complained and put the Prophet under the pressure. In this connection, the Ahzab 28,29 was revealed and gave his wives the choice to stay with the Prophet and endure the poverty or divorce and go for the comfortable life of the world.

Sina

The messenger of Allah WAS a lustful man. But when he was young he was poor and no one paid much attention to him. No young girl with noble lineage would have married a pauper like Muhammad who was running after the Camels of another woman. The Prophet had no chance to marry a beautiful young woman. Khadijah with her wealth and power was a boon to the Prophet that changed his life completely. The true nature of the Prophet

became evident when Khadijah died and he became powerful by raiding the merchant Caravans. It was then that he started to amass wealth and women.

Muhammad was not a wealthy man when he immigrated to Medina. Khadijah must have lost most of her possessions during the three hard years when the Meccan boycotted the Prophet and his family to retaliate against his continuous taunting of their deities. His first year in Medina was very hard. He had very little money to live on. His robbery attempts at several merchant caravans were all aborted. It was only at Nakhlah that by treachery he could steal the caravan and enrich himself with the booty. It took him several more of these forays and the genocide of the Jews and the confiscation of their properties to amass a lot of wealth.

And He made you heirs of their lands, their houses, and their goods, and of a land which ye had not frequented (before). And Allah has power over all things. (Q.33: 27)

But the Prophet had very little regards for his wives and would not give them what they wanted. That is why when they complained he threatened to divorce them and it is true that at one time Muhammad's wives complained because he would not give them enough of the wealth that he used to steal from the un-believers. It is in continuation of the above verse that the Prophet makes his Allah says

O Prophet! Say to thy Consorts: "If it be that ye desire the life of this World, and its glitter,- then come! I will provide for your enjoyment and set you free in a handsome manner.(Q.33: 28)

But if ye seek Allah and His Messenger, and the Home of the Hereafter, verily Allah has prepared for the well-doers amongst you a great reward.(Q.33: 29)

The Prophet was a master manipulator and knew how to control his wives and make obey him and be at his service.

O Consorts of the Prophet! If any of you were guilty of evident unseemly conduct, the Punishment would be doubled to her, and that is easy for Allah.(Q.33: 30) But any of you that is devout in the service of Allah and His Messenger, and works righteousness,- to her shall We grant her reward twice: and We have prepared for her a generous Sustenance.(Q.33: 31)

Question No. 4: The Prophet introduced religious hatred in Arabia and like Hitler exterminated the Jews of Arabia in a vicious ethnic cleansing. Should a messenger of God be so ruthless?

Ayatollah Montazeri

Ans. 4 - Comparing the treatment of the Jews of Medina by the Prophet and their genocide by Hitler is unfair and very cruel. After immigrating to Medina, the Prophet dealt with the Jews with utmost cordiality. Treaties and agreements of friendship were signed between the Jews and the Holy Prophet. It was the Jews who conspired with the Meccans and it was them who breached several treaties. Detail of these cannot be contained in this letter.

Sina

It is amazing that Hazrate Ayatollah Uzma calls me “cruel” (*zalim*) for comparing the massacre of the Jews of Medina to the holocaust of Hitler but does not see any cruelty in the cold blooded execution of up to 900 men, the exile of the thousands of the Jews, the slavery of their women and the complete eradication of these people from Arabia who had been calling Medina home for 2000 years. Hitler killed the Jews because of their race. Muhammad killed the Jews because of their race. Hitler intended to cleanse Germany of all the Jews. Muhammad did cleanse Arabia of all the Jews. What is the difference? Why should I be called cruel for comparing two similar episodes?

Banu Qaynuqa

There were three Jewish tribes living in Medina, the Banu Qaynuqa, the Bani Nadir and the Bani Quraiza. Each of these tribes had alliances with other Arab tribes and if there were skirmishes between their Arab allies and the other Jewish tribes they would have sided with their Arab friends. This is the proof that in Medina prior to Islam there were no religious strifes. All the religious intolerance was introduced by the Prophet.

When the Prophet entered Medina, he was hopeful that the Jews would accept his religion. He was preaching the same god of the Jews, approving of their prophets and telling their stories. He had chosen their holy land as his qibla (point of adoration) and was humbugging them for their allegiance.

W. N. Arafat who denies the first holocaust writes; "It is also generally accepted that at first the Prophet Muhammad hoped that the Jews of Yathrib, as followers of a divine religion, would show understanding of the new monotheistic religion, Islam." (1)

But to his dismay the Jews, just like the Quraish, ridiculed him and paid little heed to his calling. After his hopes were shattered and his patience vexed the Prophet grew hostile towards the Jews and it became evident that he would one day take his revenge.

INVASION OF BANI QAYNUQA:

The first group of the Jews that fell under the wrath of the Prophet were the Banu Qaynuqa. They lived in quarters within Madinah named after them. As for jobs, they took up goldsmithery, blacksmithing and crafts of making household instruments, that is why war weaponry was available in large quantities in their houses.

Saifur Rahman al-Mubarakpuri in *AR-Raheeq Al-Makhtum* writes: "*They (the Banu Qaynuqa) started a process of trouble-making, jeering at the Muslims, hurting those who frequented their bazaars, and even intimidating their women. Such things*

began to aggravate the general situation, so the Prophet (Peace be upon him) gathered them in assemblage, admonished and called them to be rational, sensible and guided and cautioned against further transgression. Nevertheless they remained obdurate and paid no heed to his warning, and said: "Don't be deluded on account of defeating some Quraishites inexperienced in the art of war. If you were to engage us in fight, you will realize that we are genuine war experts." (2)

Whatever those few Jews retorted to Muhammad, it was not the official voice of the whole population. But for a man looking for an excuse to strike it was a golden opportunity. Maududi says, *"This was in clear words a declaration of war."*

But it wasn't. These words did not come from the chief of the Bani Qainuqa and they were not threatening. They were shouted down by a bunch of hooligans, to someone who tried to bully them while they were acting on the instructions of their own religion and took a life for a life. Only one whose brain is numbed by his religious fanaticism can interpret the defiant words of a few youth as the declaration of war made by the entire Jews against Muslims. It is the ultimate injustice to punish an entire population with such severity with the pretext that few of them killed one man in retaliation of him killing one of theirs. That is despite the verse that says *"... no bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another"* (Q. 53: 38)

The Muslim historians want to blame it all on the Jews and depict them as the villains of the story. Jeering, however, is not a crime. But by paying a little attention to the response of the Jews to the Prophet it is not difficult to see that he did not go there to counsel them but to threaten them.

The following verse that was issued for that occasion reveals the hostile tone of the Prophet when he met the Jews.

"Say [O Muhammad to those who disbelieve: 'You will be defeated and gathered together to Hell, and worst indeed is that place to rest.' There has already been a Sign for you (O Jews) in the two armies that met (in combat — i.e. the battle of Badr): One was fighting in the cause of Allâh, and as for the other (they) were disbelievers. They (the believers) saw them (the disbelievers) with their own eyes twice their number (although they were thrice their number). And Allâh supports with His Victory whom He pleases. Verily, in this is a lesson for those who understand." [Q.3: 22,13]

"One day a Jewish goldsmith provoked a Muslim woman whose genitals become uncovered when he had tied the edge of the garment to her back. A Muslim man happened to be there and killed the man; the Jews retaliated by killing that Muslim. The man's family called the Muslims for help and war started." (2)

Incidents like these often happen in primitive societies. As a matter of fact even in very civilized societies many people are killed over something as trivial as road rage. Humans are not completely rational beings. Most people react in a very unpredictable way often with dire consequences. Any wise man, in similar situations would have eased the tension and would have calmed the mob without taking sides. But Muhammad was far from it. Already emboldened by his plundering of the passing caravans, he had his eyes on the wealth of the Jews in Yathrib and was looking for an excuse to make his move. This incident presented the golden opportunity that the Prophet was waiting for and On Saturday, Shawwal 15th, 2 A.H., he marched out with his soldiers, and laid siege to the Jews' forts for 15 days. Without the water, the Bani Qainuqa was forced to surrender and defer to the Prophet's judgement on their lives, wealth, women and children.

Maududi writes, *"Consequently, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) laid siege to their quarters towards the end of Shawwal (and according to some others, of Dhi Qa'dah) A.*

H. 2. The siege had hardly lasted for a fortnight when they surrendered and all their fighting men were tied and taken prisoners. Now Abdullah bin Ubayy came up in support of them and insisted that they should be pardoned. The Holy Prophet conceded his request and decided that the Bani Qainuqa would be exiled from Madinah leaving their properties, armour and tools of trade behind. (Ibn Sad, Ibn Hisham, Tarikh Tabari). (3)

The details of Ubayy's intercession with the Prophet are reported in the first Islamic history book, Sirat.

"Asim b. Umar b. Qatada said that the B. Qaynuqa` were the first of the Jews to break their agreement with the apostle and to go to war, between Badr and Uhud, and the apostle besieged them until they surrendered unconditionally. `Abdullah b. Ubayy b. Salul went to him when God had put them in his power and said, 'O Muhammad, deal kindly with my clients' (now they were allies of Khazraj), but the apostle put him off. He repeated the words, and the apostle turned away from him, whereupon he thrust his hand into the collar of the apostle's robe; the apostle was so angry that his face became almost black. He said, 'Confound you, let me go.' He answered, 'No, by God, I will not let you go until you deal kindly with my clients. Four hundred men without mail and three hundred mailed protected me from all mine enemies; would you cut them down in one morning? By God, I am a man who fears that circumstances may change.' The apostle said, 'You can have them.' [Sirat, p. 363]

In the words of al-Mubarakpuri, *"Banu Qainuqa handed over all materials, wealth and war equipage to the Prophet (Peace be upon him), who set aside one fifth and distributed the rest to his men. After that they were banished out of all Arabia to Azrua in Syria where they stayed for a while and soon perished away."* (2)

No one ever asked, why? Why a trivial incident should become the excuse for the envoy of God to banish a whole population and confiscate their entire belongings. The scene of

the exiles from Kosovo is too fresh in our memories yet even Milosovic who is now a war criminal did not put hand on the properties of the refugees. And the Jews did not have a UN refugee camp set for them out of Medina with Red Cross and other humanitarian organizations waiting to alleviate their pain. How any decent human being could justify these ruthless genocidal acts of the Prophet? How can any person call himself a Muslims after learning these historic truths about Muhammad? The fact that Abdullah bin Ubayy, whom al-Mubarakpuri does not hesitate to call a "hypocrite" came to the prisoner's support pleading that they be pardoned demonstrates that Muhammad's original plan was to execute them all. It was bin Ubayy's intervention that saved their lives. How is it that a "hypocrite" was more compassionate than the Messenger of Allah and Allah himself? Wasn't he a superior man to Muhammad?

BANI AN-NADIR INVASION:

Next it was the turn of the Bani Nadeer. This was another tribe of the Jews of Medina. Ka'b Ibn Ashraf, the chief of the Bani Nadeer became concerned of the safety of his tribe after witnessing the fate of the Banu Qaynuqa and how the Prophet eliminated them with no excuse at all. He realized that Muhammad would stop at nothing to eradicate the Jews. It became clear to him that the Prophet was a ruthless man with no mercy, no conscience and no principles. He would kill innocent people with no qualms. Ka'b knew that he had to do something to protect his people. That is why he started to communicate with the Meccans and seek protection from them in the case that Muslims decided to invade his people.

Ka'b bin Ashraf, the chief of the Bani an-Nadeer, "a wealthy man known for his handsomeness, and a poet, went to Makkah" Says Maududi, "and incited the people to vengeance by writing and reciting provocative elegies for the Quraish chiefs killed at Badr. Then he returned to Madinah and composed lyrical verses

of an insulting nature about the Muslim women. At last, enraged with his mischief, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) sent Muhammad bin Maslamah Ansari in Rabi al-Awwal, A. H. 3, and had him slain.” (*Ibn Sad, Ibn Hisham, Tabari*).

What should a responsible chief do when he sees that a whole population of a tribe like his was ambushed with no provocation by an emerging tyrant, and banished from their homeland despite of their treaty? Although Muslims say that it was the Jews who broke the treaty, their own very historical texts, clearly demonstrates that Muhammad is the one to be blamed for such breach of the covenant. If the stories written by Muslims are true, Ka'b bin Ashraf had no other choice but to go to Mecca and seek assistance for his people's protection. Muhammad, by virtue of what he did to Bani Qaynuqa, was not a man to be trusted. What bin Ashraf did was no crime. He was a chieftain concerned about the safety of his own people. His crime was writing poetry. Nothing justifies Muhammad sending an assassin to kill him traitorously in the middle of the night. Not his contacts with the Meccans and not his “poems satirizing Muhammad” or “eulogizing Quraish”. There is no justification in assassinating those who do not agree with you. Muslim apologists are not ashamed of Muhammad's assassinations and approve anything he did without thinking. They say that by cowardly assassinating his enemies, Muhammad was saving lives. This demonstrates how religion drains the intelligence of its victims who otherwise are normal people. How these diehard Muslim apologists justify Muhammad's assassination of Abu Afak, a 120 year old man and Asma bint Marwan a poetess and a mother of five small children whose only crime was to compose lyrics offensive to his holiness prophet of Allah. In what ways he was superior to Saddam Hussein, Bin Laden or for that matter any gangster? Isn't the assassination of the Journalists, writers and the intellectuals by the Islamic Republic of Iran and other Islamic regimes inspired by what the holy Prophet did to his critics?

The story of Kab's assassination is recorded in the following hadith.

Bukhari, Volume 5, #369:

Narrated Jabir Abdullah: Allah's messenger said "Who is willing to kill Ka`b bin al-Ashraf who has hurt Allah and His apostle?" Thereupon Maslama got up saying, "O Allah's messenger! Would you like that I kill him?" The prophet said, "Yes". Maslama said, "Then allow me to say a (false) thing (i.e. to deceive Ka`b). The prophet said, "You may say it."

Maslama went to Ka`b and said, "That man (i.e. Muhammad) demands Sadaqa (i.e. Zakat) [taxes] from us, and he has troubled us, and I have come to borrow something from you." On that, Ka`b said, "By Allah, you will get tired of him!" Maslama said, "Now as we have followed him, we do not want to leave him unless and until we see how his end is going to be. Now we want you to lend us a camel load or two of food." Ka`b said, "Yes, but you should mortgage something to me." Maslama and his companion said, "What do you want?" Ka`b replied, "Mortgage your women to me." They said, "How can we mortgage our women to you and you are the most handsome of the Arabs?" Ka`b said, "Then mortgage your sons to me." They said, "How can we mortgage our sons to you? Later they would be abused by the people's saying that so and so has been mortgaged for a camel load of food. That would cause us great disgrace, but we will mortgage our arms to you."

Maslama and his companion promised Ka`b that Maslama would return to him. He came to Ka`b at night along with Kab's foster brother, Abu Naila. Ka`b invited them to come into his fort and then he went down to them. His wife asked him, "Where are you going at this time?" Ka`b replied, "None but Maslama and my (foster) brother Abu Naila have come." His wife said, "I hear a voice as if blood is dropping from him." Ka`b said, "They are none but my brother Maslama and my foster brother Abu Naila. A

generous man should respond to a call at night even if invited to be killed."

Maslama went with two men. So Maslama went in together with two men, and said to them, "When Ka`b comes, I will touch his hair and smell it, and when you see that I have got hold of his head, strike him. I will let you smell his head."

Ka`b bin al-Ashraf came down to them wrapped in his clothes, and diffusing perfume. Maslama said, "I have never smelt a better scent than this." Kab replied, "I have got the best Arab women who know how to use the high class of perfume." Maslama requested Kab "Will you allow me to smell your head?" Kab said "yes." Maslama smelt it and made his companions smell it as well. Then he requested Ka`b again, "Will you let me (smell your head)?" Ka`b said "Yes". When Maslama got a strong hold of him, he said (to his companions) "Get at him!" So they killed him and went to the prophet and informed him."

This story becomes more intriguing as it evolves. Maududi continues with his narrative and says, *"For some time after these punitive measures (i. e. the banishment of the Qainuqa and killing of Ka'b bin Ashraf) the Jews remained so terror stricken that they did not dare commit any further mischief. But later when in Shawwal, A. H. 3, the Quraish in order to avenge themselves for the defeat at Badr, marched against Madinah with great preparations, and the Jews saw that only a thousand men had marched out with the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) as against three thousand men of the Quraish, and even they were deserted by 300 hypocrites who returned to Madinah, they committed the first and open breach of the treaty by refusing to join the Holy Prophet in the defence of the city although they were bound to it."*

It is amazing that Muslims expected collaboration from Bani Nadeer after assassinating their charming leader and completely destroying their brethrens, the Bani Qaynuqa. Muhammad proved

to be a ruthless tyrant that would stop at nothing. He would order the assassination of his enemies and next day appear in the mosque reciting prayers as if nothing had happened and praise the killer. He would have no mercy on a 120-year-old man or a nursing woman with five small children to take care of. He would look for an excuse to lash out on an entire population confiscate their belongings and banish them from their homes. If it weren't for someone else's intervention he would have had no qualms executing thousands of Bani Qaynuqa. As Maududi brags these poor Jews were terror stricken and must have asked themselves when would be their turn? And yet the Muslims call them traitors for not willing to fight alongside them after they had killed their chieftain. Wasn't killing Ka'b ibn Ashraf and exiling the Bani Qaynuqa the breach of the contract? Or perhaps Muhammad thought that the treaty is only one sided and while obliges the Jews to observe it, he was free to do as he pleased!

Maududi narrates the story of Muhammad's meeting with the Bani Nadeer thus: *“Then, when in the Battle of Uhud the Muslims suffered reverses, they were further emboldened. So much so that the Bani an-Nadir made a secret plan to kill the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) though the plan failed before it could be executed. According to the details, after the incident of Bi'r Maunah (Safar, A. H. 4) Amr bin Umayyah Damri slew by mistake two men of the Bani Amir in retaliation, who actually belonged to a tribe, which was allied to the Muslims, but Amr had mistaken them for the men of the enemy. Because of this mistake their blood money became obligatory on the Muslims. Since the Bani an-Nadir were also a party in the alliance with the Bani Amir, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) went to their clan along with some of his Companions to ask for their help in paying the blood money. Outwardly they agreed to contribute, as he wished, but secretly they plotted that a person should go up to the top of the house by whose wall the Holy*

Prophet was sitting and drop a rock on him to kill him. But before they could execute their plan, Allah informed him in time and he immediately got up and returned to Madinah.”

What an absurdity! First of all Muhammad already broke any treaty when he assassinated Ka'b bin Ashraf. He already broke all treaties when he confiscated the belongings of the Banu Qaynuqa and banished them on foot in the desert. Now that his assassins, by mistake killed someone else, of which Banu Nadeer had no fault he wanted them to pay for his crimes. Treaties are not made to bail out the criminal activities of the other party. The treaty was to defend Yathrib from the invasion of the enemies. Muhammad's crimes and his gangster activities was not the subject of the treaty. It is unconscionable that intelligent human beings become so dumb to read this story for 1400 years and none of them pause for a second and think. Could you even imagine if the same story was repeated today between two nations that have signed a joint treaty? Let us assume that the president of one of these countries was so low that like Muhammad he decided to eliminate his enemies through assassination, would it be conceivable if he came to his ally and demand to bail him out for his criminal mistakes?

In this story, apparently Muhammad goes to the Bani Nadeer and makes his demand. These terrified Jews of course knew that the treaty did not mean that they should bail out for Muhammad's crime activities and blunders. But they were too weak and too frightened to oppose the emerging tyrant, so they agreed. But this was not what the Prophet of Allah had in mind. He was hoping that they reject him so that he gets an excuse to deal with them the way he dealt with the Banu Qaynuqa. Bani Nadeer had the best-cultivated land in Yathrib. Muhammad had his eyes on their plantations and farms. Bukhari Volume 9, Book 92, number 447: He was just getting his taste of power and he loved it. So he had to come up with an excuse. When Bani Nadeer disappointed him

and agreed with his request. He needed a pretext to act upon his plan and confiscate the properties of these wealthy Jews. There again, the prophet of Allah had a new “inspiration”. It was a brilliant idea. He told his companions that the Jews had plotted to kill him. His followers believed him when he told them of his Miraj in the company of Gabriele. They had no difficulty believing whatever to believe in any absurdity that he concocted.

Al-Mubarakpouri writes, *"Once the Prophet (Peace be upon him) with some of his Companions set out to see Banu Nadeer and seek their help in raising the blood-money he had to pay to Bani Kalb for the two men that Amr bin Omaiya Ad-Damari had killed by mistake. All of that was in accordance with the clauses of the treaty that both parties had already signed. On hearing his story they said they would share in paying the blood-money and asked him and his Companions Abu Bakr, Umar, Ali and others to sit under a wall of their houses and wait. The Jews held a short private meeting and conspired to kill the Prophet (Peace be upon him). The most wicked among them, Amr bin Jahsh, volunteered to climb up the wall and drop a large millstone on his head. One of them, Salam bin Mashkam, cautioned them against perpetrating such a crime, predicting that Allâh would divulge their plot to him, and added that such an act would constitute a manifest violation of the pact concluded with the Muslims.*

In fact, Gabriel did come down to reveal to the Prophet (Peace be upon him) their wicked criminal intention, so he, with his Companions, hurried off back to Madinah. On their way, he told his Companions of the Divine Revelation."

Of course, Bani Nadeer was part of the treaty that the Prophet signed with the Medinans, but the treaty was to fight against the Meccans if they attacked Medina and not to pay for assassination mishaps of the messenger of Allah. Yet interestingly, despite the absurdity of this demand and despite the fact that the Prophet had assassinated their leader, the Bani Nadeer agreed to pay the

ransom. They knew Muhammad and did not want to give him an excuse to exterminate them like he did with the Bani Qaynuqa. They knew that any rejection would mean their death and had no choice but to accept this unjust levy.

But the Prophet who apparently wished they decline this absurd demand and therefore use it as an excuse to declare war against them was disappointed at their complacency. The messenger of Allah, really had no other purpose than to find an excuse and exterminate the Bani Nadeer.

The Prophet who believed that God is *khairul makereen* [the best of the deceivers] was himself a cunning man. The story of Gabriel informing him of the plot of the Jews against his life is as credible as his visits of the hell and heaven in the night of Mi'raj or his other fantasy tales of his encounters with Jinns and Satan. It would make us doubt his sanity or his sincerity but his easy to fleece followers would actually believe him and would go killing innocent people for the lies he counted them.

The truth is that it was not the Jews who breached the treaty but it was Muhammad who broke it and along with it he broke the very cords of human decency. He broke the norms of humanity, the human morality, the laws of compassion, the rules of Justice, the standards of ethics and violated the principles of goodness. The Prophet of Allah {peace be upon him} took away the peace from the people who crossed his way and for 1400 years plunged humanity into never ending wars. He instigated hatred in the world and among his followers that is consuming them and the rest of humanity.

The above story raises few more logical questions. If these Jews really wanted to kill Muhammad, couldn't they easily capture and kill him along with his companions? Why drop a stone when he and his companions were already in their hands? And why a God who could inform his beloved prophet of a plot against him did not make 'Amr bin Jahsh to fall to his death? This

could have saved his prophet and the entire Jewish population. Didn't God know that his messenger has no mercy and no compassion for the lives of thousands of innocent people and he would make all pay for the crime of a few? If God was so angry of these Jews that he did not care about them anymore, why did he himself not kill them with a disease? Why he did not order the Earth to open its belly, as a story if Bible says (numbers; 16:30) and devour them all? It certainly would have been much easier on them and on the Muslims. Why a loving God would ask his devoted servants to act like common murderers and ruthless killers? Only people blinded by faith do not cringe by hearing these stories. To every reasonable person it is obvious that Muhammad made up the whole thing to continue with his plans of ethnic cleansing and plundering.

Maududi finished this story by saying, *“Now there was no question of showing them any further concession. The Holy Prophet at once sent to them the ultimatum that the treachery they had meditated against him had come to his knowledge; therefore, they were to leave Madinah within ten days; if anyone of them was found staying behind in their quarters, he would be put to the sword. Meanwhile Abdullah bin Ubayy sent them the message that he would help them with two thousand men and that the Bani Quraiza and Bani Ghatafan also would come to their aid; therefore, they should stand firm and should not go. On this false assurance they responded to the Holy Prophet's ultimatum saying that they would not leave Madinah and he could do whatever was in his power. Consequently, in Rabi' al-Awwal, A. H. 4, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) laid siege to them, and after a few days of the siege (which according to some traditions were 6 and according to others 15 days) they agreed to leave Madinah on the condition that they could retain all their property which they could carry on their camels, except the armor. Thus, Madinah was rid of this second mischievous*

tribe of Jews. Only two of the Bani an-Nadeer became Muslims and stayed behind. Others went to Syria and Khaiber.”

Muhammad did not massacre the Bani Nadeer as he did the Banu Qurayza, another Jewish tribe residing in Medina but the thought have surely came to him as we can see from the following extract from Sirat.

"Concerning B. al-Nadir the Sura of Exile came down in which is recorded how God wreaked His vengeance on them and gave His apostle power over them and how He dealt with them. God said: 'He it is who turned out those who disbelieved of the scripture people from their homes to the first exile. ...'*So consider this, you who have understanding. Had not God prescribed deportation against them,' which was vengeance from God, 'He would have punished them in this world,'* (Q. 59: 3) i.e. with the sword, *“and in the next world there would be the punishment of hell' as well”*. [Sirat, p. 438]

There is a verse from Quran that speaks about this event confirming Muhammad's actions in killing them and taking them as prisoners.

"He caused those of the People of the Book who helped them (i.e. the Quraysh) to come out of their forts. Some you killed, some you took prisoner.” Q. 33: 26

It is in this occasion that Muhammad orders the cutting and burning the trees, and even then Allah would reveal a verse to condone that despicable act.

“What you (O Muslims) cut down of the palm-trees (of the enemy), or you left them standing on their stems, it was by leave of Allâh.” Q. 59: 5

Neither the Quraiza nor the Ghatafans came to help the Bani Nadeer and they were forced to surrender within days and were banished out of Medina. Some left to Syria and some headed to Khaibar. Huyai Ibd Akhtab the new chief of the Bani Nadeer was

among those who went to Khaibar. He was murdered few years later when the Prophet invaded the Banu Quraiza and his daughter Safiyah became the booty of the Prophet when Khaibar fell into the hand of the Muslims.

Al-Mubarkpuri writes,

"The Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) seized their weapons, land, houses, and wealth. Amongst the other booty he managed to capture, there were 50 armours, 50 helmets, and 340 swords.

"This booty was exclusively the Prophet's because no fighting was involved in capturing it. He divided the booty at his own discretion among the early Emigrants and two poor Helpers, Abu Dujana and Suhail bin Haneef. Anyway the Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) spent a portion of this wealth on his family to sustain their living the year around. The rest was expended to provide the Muslim army with equipment for further wars in the way of Allâh.

"Almost all the verses of Surah Al-Hashr (Chapter 59 - The Gathering) describe the banishment of the Jews and reveal the disgraceful manners of the hypocrites. The verses manifest the rules relevant to the booty. In this Chapter, Allâh, the All-Mighty, praises the Emigrants and Helpers. This Chapter also shows the legitimacy of cutting down and burning the enemy's land and trees for military purposes. Such acts cannot be regarded as phenomena of corruption so long that they are in the way of Allah."

As it becomes obvious and even the Muslim historians are not abashed to admit, no crime is bad as long as it is done in the way of Allah. This was the example that the Prophet left for his followers and this has been the way that the devout Muslims have been acting throughout the history. This perhaps can explain to an uninitiated Westerner the inspiration behind Islamic fundame-

ntalism and Islamic terrorism. Islamic violence is not a deviation of the true Islam but it IS the true Islam. Murdering, plundering, raping and assassinating are Islamic practices. Nothing is out of limit when it comes to promoting the religion of Allah.

Ironically, this very Surah concludes by exhorting the believers to be pious and prepare themselves for the world to come, which makes one wonder about the twisted mind of its author and the distorted values that he upheld.

We, with our modern sensibility wonder how the followers of Muhammad did not abandon him based on his cruelty and inhumanity. But apparently plundering and looting was the norm, in Arabia. Al-Mubarakpuri writes, “*The desert Bedouins living in tents pitched in the vicinity of Madinah... depended on plundering and looting as a means of living.*” This was the way Arabs used to live. When Muhammad used the same techniques to amass his wealth and build his empire, no one raised an eyebrow. This was accepted and everybody did it. In fact when people went to war to bring the booty they prayed to their gods. If they were victorious, they glorified their gods and hailed them as being powerful. Muslims and Muhammad belonged to this primitive culture and had the same primitive mindset. They beseeched Allah, the only idol, for their victories and since Muhammad did not hesitate to attack merchant caravans or unarmed populations he enriched himself and his army very soon. These Arabs attributed his military prowess to the greatness of Allah, What those Arabs believed is not reproachable. They did not know better and this was the only way of life they had ever known. What is tragically deplorable is to see that in this age of science and reason educated people follow the religion of people with such a primitive mentality.

As we saw, if the Bani Nadeer really wanted to kill Muhammad and his few companions, they did not need to make such complicated plans of climbing the wall of throwing a

millstone on over their head. He was in their town and they could have killed him easily.

But let us suppose that Muhammad was right and they actually had such plan. Under what law it is allowed to punish thousands of people for a failed murder attempt by a few? Isn't everyone responsible for his own action? What was the crime of those new born children, those pregnant women, those elderly Jews who had to leave everything behind and walk in the desert? How many of those perished? Why the weak ones had to pay for a failed attempt of a few members of their tribe?

Another important thing to consider is that Muhammad actually assassinated Kab bin Ashraf the leader of the Bani Nadir; very traitorously. These people, according to their own religion and custom, had all the rights to revenge. Why Muhammad believed that he could go killing all his opponents without any impunity but the simple thought of someone planning to kill him should be punished so severely? What would happen to the world if we all followed Muhammad's example?

I ask Muslims to show me one parallel story in the annals of history of mankind where an entire population of thousands of people was eliminated because of a failed plot of few of them against the life of someone.

A Hadith in Bukhari Volume 5, Book 59, number 362 confirms this story. The narrator talks about the treatment of the Jews of Medina and how Muhammad "killed their men and distributed their women, children and property among the Muslims, but some of them came to the Prophet and he granted them safety, and they embraced Islam. He exiled all the Jews from Medina."

Some Muslim apologists say that the morality of today should not be applied to Muhammad who lived 1400 years ago. They maintain that, *"This whole narrative has been problematic for*

many people because of their notions of what is morally correct and what is morally wrong. The origin of this sickness rests squarely on the Christian mentality of 'turn the other cheek,' and the 'redemptive suffering of Christ,' both of which have been sicknesses in the minds of Europe for centuries on end, until they came to their senses and discarded it."

I don't believe that morality is sickness and it has nothing to do with Christianity either. Morality stems out of human consciousness and its compass is the Golden Rule. We know what is right or wrong when we consider the way we would like to be treated.

INVADING BANU QURAIZA:

The next were the Banu Quraiza. Soon after the Battle of the Trench was over, Muhammad claimed that the Archangel Gabriel had visited him "asking that he should unsheathe his sword and head for the habitation of the seditious Banu Quraiza and fight them. Gabriel noted that he with a procession of angels would go ahead to shake their forts and cast fear in their hearts." (2) Sahih Bukhari Volume 5, Book 59, Number 443

It is not clear why the Archangel needed Muslim's help to wipe out the Jews if he had "a procession of angels" who would shake their forts. Nevertheless, *"the Messenger of Allâh immediately summoned the prayer caller and ordered him to announce fresh hostilities against Banu Quraiza"* (2)

Muhammad headed an army of three thousand infantry men and thirty horsemen of *Ansar* (Helpers) and *Muhajireen* (Emigrants).

The Banu Quraiza was attacked for not supporting Muhammad when the Quraish attacked Medina. Ali sworn that he would never stop until he either storms their garrisons or be killed. This siege lasted 25 days. Finally the Banu Qurayza surrendered unconditionally. Muhammad ordered that the men be handcuffed,

while the women and children were isolated in confinement. Thereupon Al-Aws tribe interceded begging the Prophet to be lenient towards them. Muhammad suggested that Sad bin Muadh, a former ally, be deputed to give verdict about them, and they agreed.

Sad's verdict who had received as a serious wound in the previous Battle of the Confederates was "that all the able-bodied male persons belonging to the tribe should be killed, women and children taken prisoners and their wealth divided among the Muslim fighters." Sahih Bukhari Volume 4, Book 52, Number 280

One wonders why Muhammad who claimed to be the messenger of Allah and in contact with him needed the judgment of a human. Yet this most cruel verdict was precisely what pleased him and he "accepted his judgment saying that Sad had adjudged by the Command of Allâh."

Al-Mubarakpouri adds that *"In fact, the Jews deserved that severe punitive action for the ugly treachery they had harbored against Islam, and the large arsenal they have amassed and which consisted of one thousand and five hundred swords, two thousand spears, three hundred armours and five hundred shields, all of which went into the hands of the Muslims."* (4)

The Muslims historians have been quick to bring the same baseless alibis to justify their raids against their victims like, they were "mischievous", causing "sedition" or being "treacherous" and "harboring against Islam". However, no specifics exist as of the nature of those sins to warrant such a severe punishment and their total genocide.

Trenches were dug in the bazaar of Madinah and a number of Jews between six and nine hundred were beheaded therein.

Huyai, Ibn Akhtab, the chief of the Bani Nadeer and Safiya's father was captured in this siege and brought to the Prophet with

his hands tied to his neck with a rope. In an audacious defiance he rejected Muhammad and preferred to be beheaded than submitting to his Religion by force. He was ordered to sit down and was beheaded on the spot.

To separate men from the boys, the youngsters were examined and if they had grown any pubic hair, it was enough to behead them.

Sunan Abu-Dawud Book 38, Number 4390: Narrated Atiyah al-Qurazi: "I was among the captives of Banu Qurayzah. They (the Companions) examined us, and those who had begun to grow hair (pubes) were killed, and those who had not were not killed. I was among those who had not grown hair".

If anyone cannot see that this is NOT how a messenger of God should behave cannot claim to have grasped the meaning of humanness. I believe the cruelties of what the Prophet did to the Jews of Arabia are self-explanatory and any fair-minded person would acknowledge that. It is inconceivable that a messenger of God could kill between 600 to 900 people and banish thousands more with no feelings or compassion.

The man we call the Prophet was full of hate. He thought of nothing but killing, brought nothing but death, taught nothing but vengeance. Muhammad was not a "mercy of God to mankind" but the curse of devil to humanity. Not only in his life he killed and banished all the Jews he could lay hand on, in his dead bed he instructed his followers to continue with the ethnic cleansing that he had initiated.

Bukhari Volume 4, Book 52, number 288: The Prophet on his death-bed gave three orders one of them was to Expel the pagans from the Arabian Peninsula.

Bukhari Volume 4, Book 52, number 176: Narrated Abdullah bin Umar: Allah's Apostle said, "You (i.e. Muslims) will fight with the Jews till some of them will hide behind stones. The

stones will (betray them) saying, 'O Abdullah (i.e. slave of Allah)! There is a Jew hiding behind me; so kill him.' "

This man was a hoodlum, not a messenger of God; he was a thief, a gangster and a highway robber. He enriched himself with the wealth of his victims.

Bukhari Volume 4, Book 52, Number 176: Narrated Anas bin Malik: "People used to give some of their date palms to the Prophet (as a gift), till he conquered Bani Quraiza and Bani An-Nadir, whereupon he started returning their favors".

If you still believe that Muhammad was a messenger of God. Think to yourself what has happened to your humanity.